

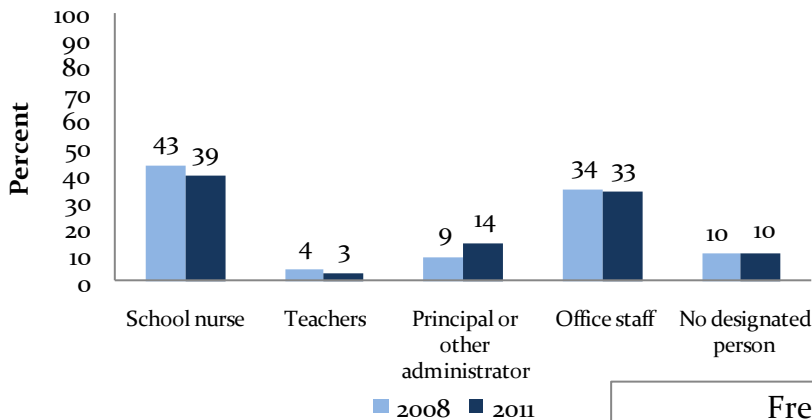


Montana School Administrators Asthma Survey 2008 & 2011



This report details the results of an electronic survey sent to over 800 Montana-based school administrators in May 2008 and resent, with slight changes, in March 2011 using the School Administrators of Montana e-mail listserv. A total of 194 administrators responded in 2008 for a response rate of 24% and a total of 181 responded in 2011 for a response rate of 23%.

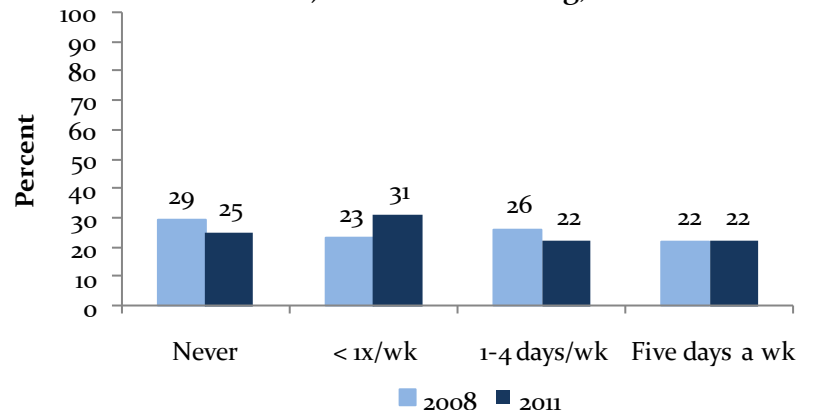
Usual staff person who handles health related issues in the school 2008 & 2011



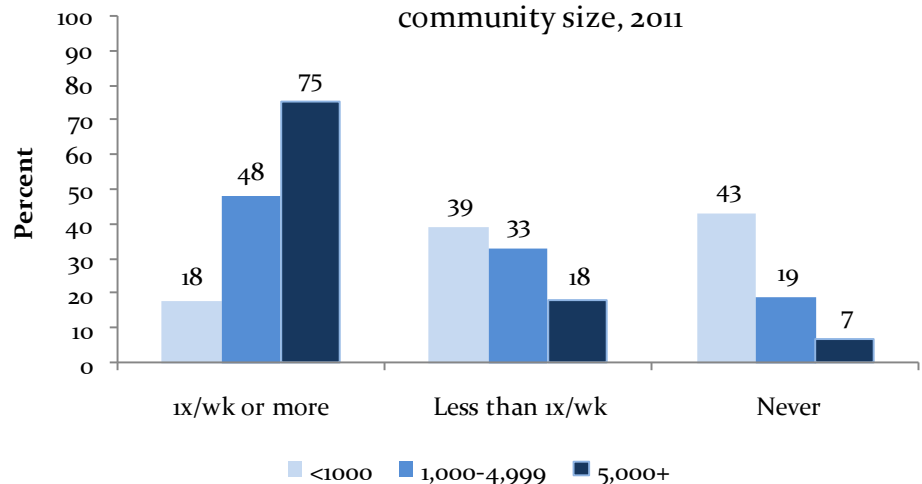
- In 2011, 39% of administrators reported that a nurse handled health related issues in their school. Office staff handled health issues in 33% of reporting schools.
- Ten percent of schools reported in 2011 that there is no designated person in their school to handle health related issues. This is unchanged from 2008.

- In 2011, over half of schools report that a nurse is in their school either less than 1 time a week or never.
- One out of every five schools surveyed reported having a nurse in the building five days a week in both 2008 and 2011.
- How frequent a nurse is in the school building has remained virtually unchanged since 2008.
- Never having a medical professional in the school to provide health services occurs much more frequently in schools that serve small populations than schools that serve larger populations.

Frequency of a school nurse (or another medical professional who provides health services to students) in school building, 2008 & 2011



Frequency of a school nurse (or another medical professional) who provides health services in a school by community size, 2011





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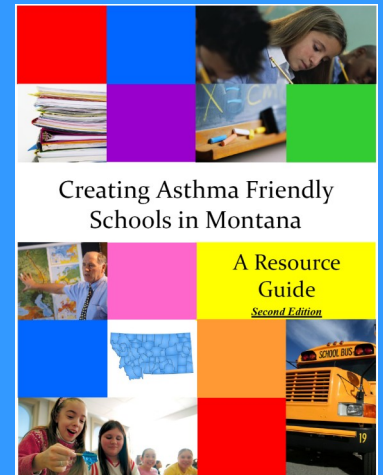


Since 2007, Montana has received funding from the National School Boards Association and the American Association of School Administrators to address the problem of asthma in schools. Partners in the "Montana Team Asthma" project include the School Administrators of Montana, Montana School Boards Association, the Montana Association of School Nurses and the Montana Asthma Control Program. This group developed a resource guide entitled, "Creating Asthma Friendly Schools in Montana" that outlines seven steps to creating an asthma friendly school:

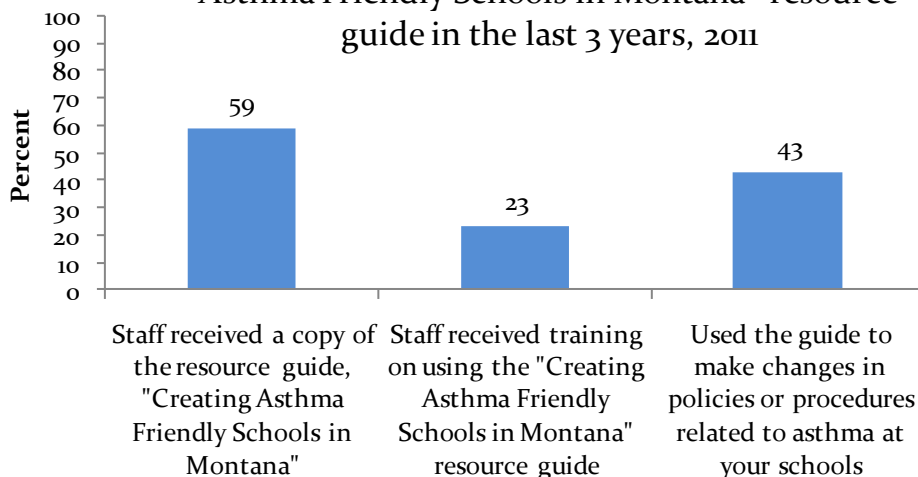
1. Identify students with asthma
2. Allow students easy access to their inhalers
3. Create a school wide protocol for handling worsening asthma
4. Identify and reduce common asthma triggers
5. Enable students with asthma to participate in school activities
6. Educate staff, students and parents
7. Collaborate with families, students, staff and health providers

Since 2008, Montana Team Asthma has distributed over 1500 copies of the resource guide and provided in-person training on asthma to over 800 school staff in Montana. Online training for school staff and coaches with continuation credits from the Office of Public Instruction is now available at the website:

www.asthmamontana.com



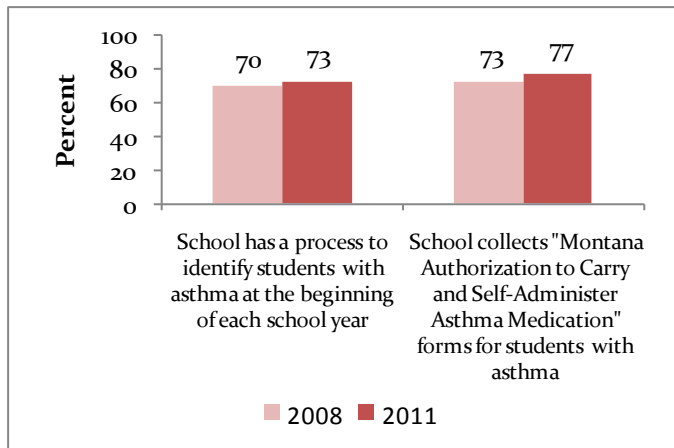
Reported receipt and utilization of the "Creating Asthma Friendly Schools in Montana" resource guide in the last 3 years, 2011



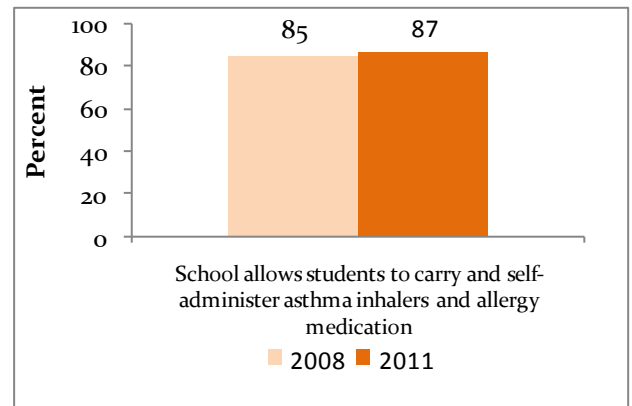
- More than half of school administrators report receiving the resource guide in the last three years and almost one quarter report that they or their staff have received training on how to utilize the guide.
- Of the administrators who report receiving the guide, 43% report using the guide to make changes related to asthma at their school

Survey Results: Steps to Creating Asthma Friendly Schools

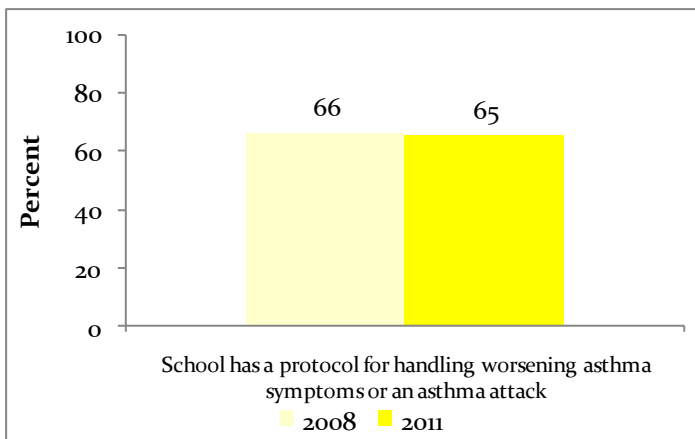
Step #1 Identify students with asthma



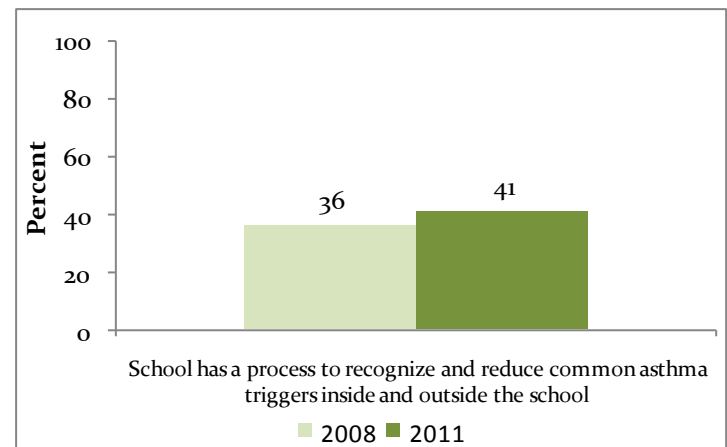
Step #2 Allow students easy access to their inhalers



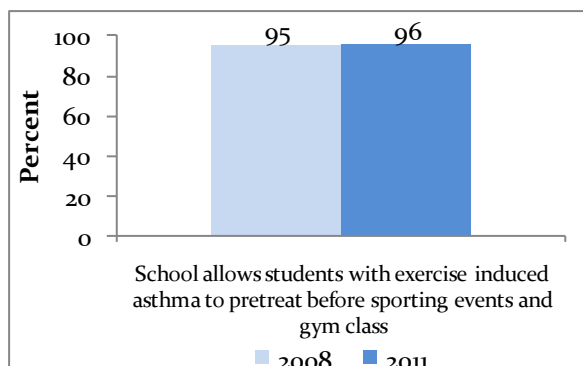
Step #3 Create a school wide protocol for handling worsening asthma



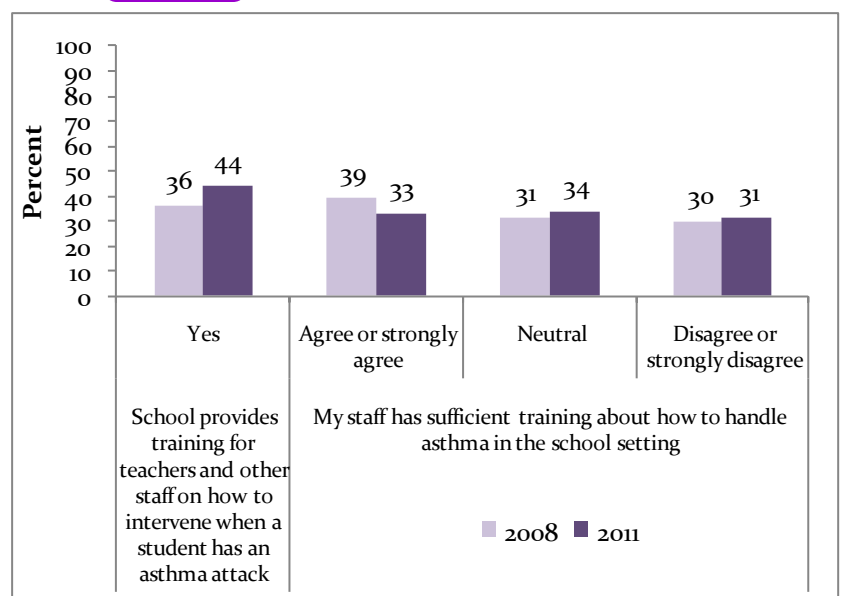
Step #4 Identify and reduce common asthma triggers



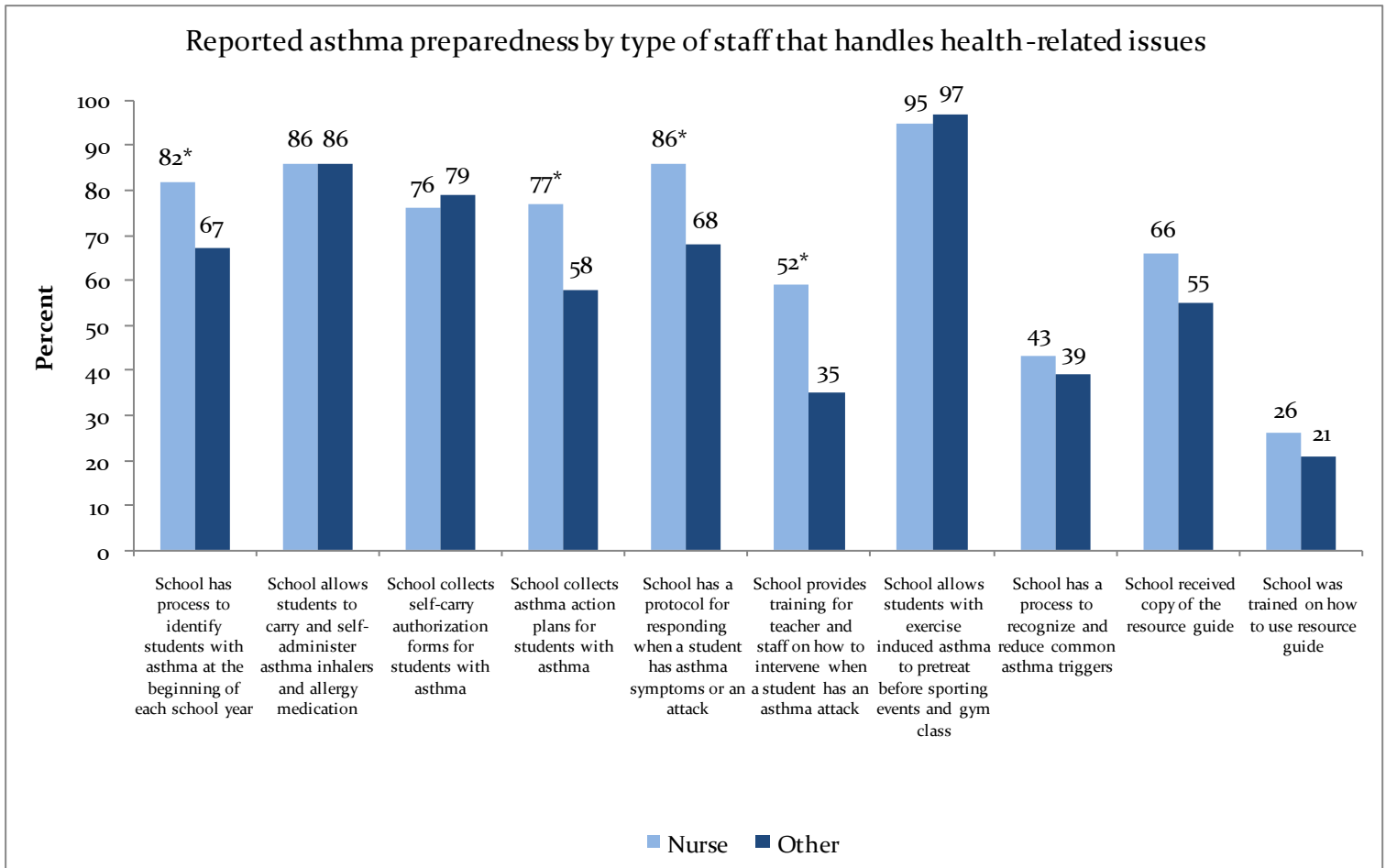
Step #5 Enable students with asthma to participate in school activities



Step #6 Educate staff, students and parents



Effect of school nursing on asthma friendly schools

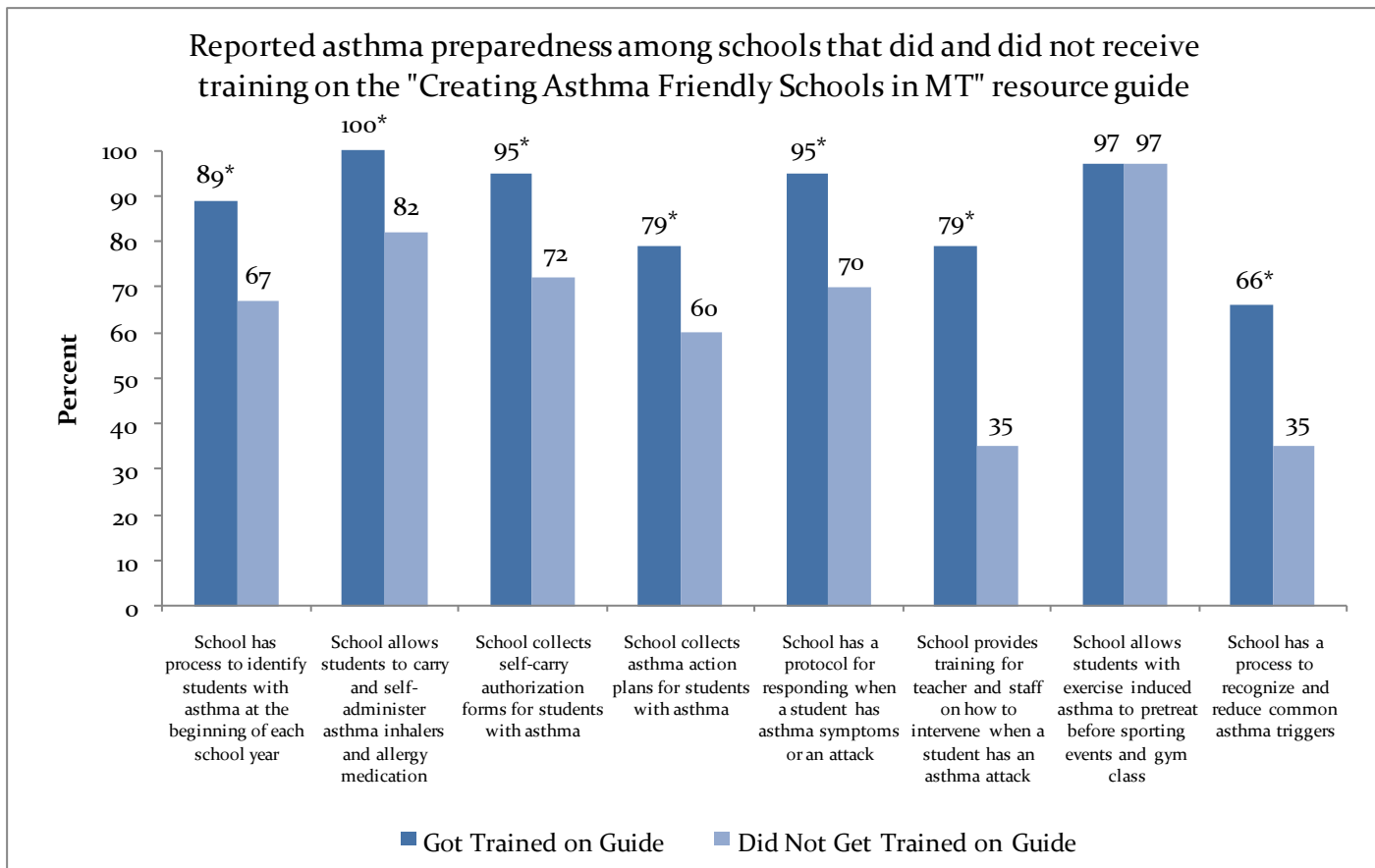


* Statistically Significant

Having a school nurse in the building who handles the health-related issues can be beneficial to the school's preparedness when dealing with students with asthma.

- Schools that have a nurse who handles most health-related issues had a significantly higher prevalence of having a process to identify students with asthma, collect asthma action plans, have a protocol for responding when a student has asthma symptoms, and providing training staff on how to intervene with a students has an asthma attack.
- Most schools reported allowing students to self-carry and administer asthma inhalers and allergy medication and to allow students to pre-treat with medication before exercising, no matter whether a nurse was the main person to handle health-related issues or not.

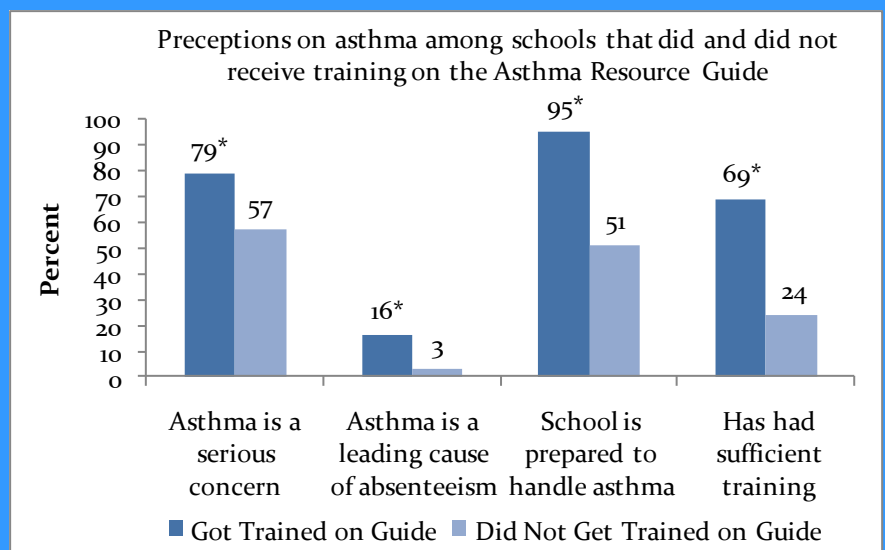
Effect of training on creating asthma friendly schools



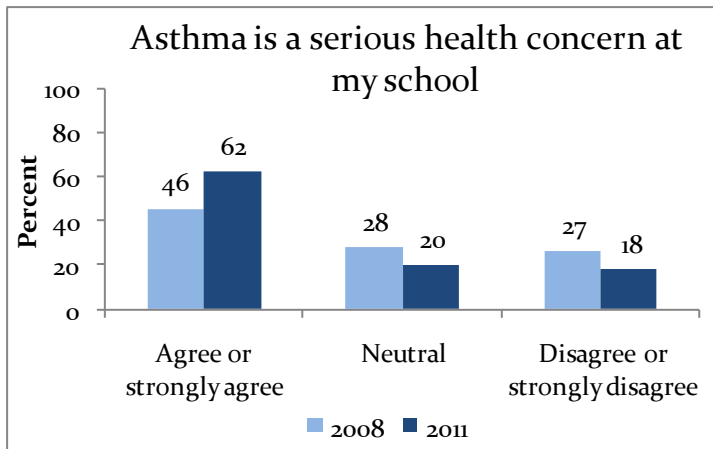
* Statistically Significant

Over the past three years members of Montana Team Asthma have provided training across the state to more than 800 school staff on using the "Creating Asthma Friendly Schools in Montana" resource guide. Receipt of this training had a significant impact on whether a school had implemented the steps necessary to create an asthma friendly environment.

- The 23% of school administrators that reported that their staff had received training on the resource guide were significantly more likely to report that their school had the policies and practices of an asthma friendly school in place.
- The only indicator that was not different was whether the school allows students to pretreat for their asthma before exercise (almost all administrators in both groups report that their school allows pretreatment).
- For some of the steps, receipt of training almost doubled likelihood of a school having the appropriate asthma friendly procedure in place. For instance, only 35% of school administrators whose staff had not received the training reported that their school has a process to recognize and reduce common asthma triggers, compared to 66% of administrators whose staff have received the training.
- Training also had a significant impact on administrator's perceptions of asthma. Ninety-five percent of school administrators whose staff had received training felt that their school is prepared to handle asthma, compared to only 51% of administrators whose staff had not received training.

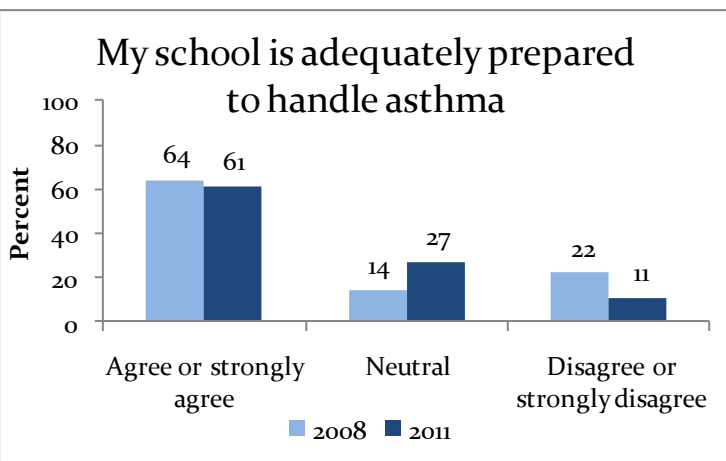
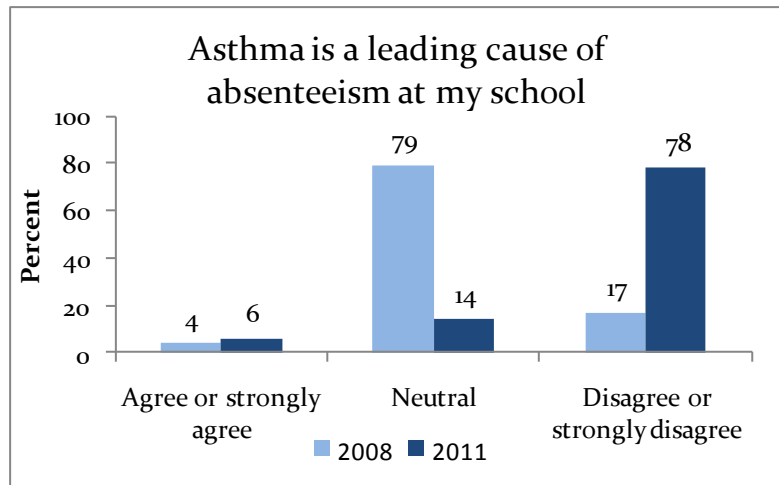


Survey Results: Perception of Asthma in School



The percent of administrators who agree or strongly agree that asthma is a serious health concern at their school increased from 46 to 62 percent from 2008 to 2011.

In both 2008 and 2011, only a small percentage of administrators agreed that asthma was a leading cause of absenteeism at their school. The number of administrators who disagreed with that statement went up sharply in 2011 compared to 2008.



64% and 61% of administrators in 2008 and 2011 agreed that their school was adequately prepared to handle asthma. Only 11% (compared to 22%) of administrators in 2011 disagree or strongly disagree that their school is adequately prepared to handle asthma.

Conclusions

For the past three years, Montana has made a concerted effort to educate schools on the importance of asthma using the "Creating Asthma Friendly Schools in Montana" resource guide. This pre-post survey indicates areas where we have succeeded in this effort and highlights areas where additional challenges remain.

- **Raising awareness:** A greater percentage of school administrators now agree that asthma is a serious health concern at their school (62% in 2011 vs 46% in 2008).
- **Reaching our audience with effective training:** More than half of school administrators report that they have received the resource guide and almost a quarter report that their staff have been trained to use the guide. Schools that received training on the resource guide are significantly more likely to report having an asthma friendly environment.
- **The importance of school nurses:** Schools with better nurse coverage adhere to the seven steps in the resource guide more closely than schools with less coverage, especially the more complicated steps like collecting asthma action plans and providing staff training.
- **Remaining challenges:** Fewer school administrators report that their school is adequately prepared to handle asthma today than in 2008, perhaps because of their raised awareness of the problem. And even with this extensive, statewide effort, schools still report that they do not allow students to self-carry asthma medication (which is contrary to Montana law) and many schools report that their staff do not have adequate training on asthma and that they do not have a process in place to identify and reduce asthma triggers.
- **Moving forward:** Montana Team Asthma will continue to provide free resources and training to Montana Schools to meet these challenges. Visit www.asthamontana.com for more information or to request training and materials.